

# Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office

Brett Hammers

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On Saturday, 11/8/14, around 3:00 PM, I was driving East on High School Blvd towards the YMCA when I noticed a white SUV pull out of the NYSA parking lot and saw a cell phone drop from the top of the vehicle. Wanting to be a Good Samaritan, I picked up the phone in the middle of the road, and proceeded to try and catch up to the SUV now going West on High School Blvd. When I was finally ~100 yards away from the vehicle, I proceeded to honk my horn a few times repeatedly trying to get the driver's attention; while holding the cell phone outside of the window. I performed the same technique as I got closer to the white SUV and was finally able to get her attention ~30 yards from the intersection of High School Blvd and Highway 87. The driver, an older Female, proceeded to stop her car, get out of her vehicle, walk backwards to my stopped car, and began to thank me for what I had done as I gave her back her phone. At the exact same time, 2 cop cars pulled up behind our stopped vehicles. The older Female driver immediately explained the situation to officer Baney as did I. Officer Baney rudely and abrasively asked if the driver of the white SUV and I knew each other, to which we replied we did not, and he responded by telling the other driver to immediately leave the scene. When she tried to explain the story again, he rudely told her to leave at that instant. He then approached me, asked for my license and registration, I gave him my license and as I looked for my registration tried to tell him what had happened again. He loudly told me "Didn't I ask you for your registration?" as if to stop me from talking. Officer Baney then asked me if I knew how fast I was going, to which I replied I didn't know the specific speed, but that I was carefully trying to catch up to the other driver. Officer Baney asked me what I was doing, to which I told him the entire story of what had just happened and that I was just trying to do a good deed. He immediately responded back with "Why?" which I told him "I was just trying to be a good citizen." Officer Baney then asked me what my profession was, which I answered that I just became a licensed physical therapist the week before. He very rudely and condescendingly replied with "Don't you do enough good deeds as is?" At that point, Officer Baney walked back to his car, wrote me a ticket, and returned to my vehicle. He told me that I was driving dangerously and cited me for excessive use of horn and a speeding warning. I told him my story one my time and the fact that I was just trying to do the right thing, that I live and drive by this school on a daily basis to go to the YMCA, and that I was being very careful as I was driving to look for any pedestrians. Officer Baney quickly shrugged off my explanation and told me that if I kept speaking, he would go back to his car and write me for a speeding violation. When I asked him if he would want somebody else to do the same thing for him if he dropped his phone from the top of his car to which he gave no response. Before leaving I asked him how to go about appealing this citation, to which he intimidatingly told me to do it within 30 days, and that if I attempt to appeal the ticket the "fine" itself could go up. During the entire situation, Officer Baney acted and spoke very rudely, condescendingly, and down to both the driver of the other vehicle and myself.

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